

to be only coated by an inactive material. Independent claim 21 calls for a first face of the soot trapping means to be only coated by an inactive material, and the reforming means to be carried by the soot trapping means on a second face of the soot trapping means.

As discussed in the August 14, 2007 Amendment, Noguchi and Gadkaree fail to disclose or suggest the above combination of features. Pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action admits that Noguchi fails to disclose the above combination of features, and Gadkaree fails to provide any disclosure with regard to the first face that is only coated by an inactive material and a second face that carries a reforming catalyst as called for in claims 1, 21 and 31 because Gadkaree does not explicitly disclose how the catalyst is highly dispersed.

Rao also fails to disclose or suggest a first face that is only coated by an inactive material as called for in claims 1, 21 and 31.

The face of Rao's inlet channels 44 (which is the only face that corresponds to the first face as defined by claims 1, 21 and 31) includes a layer 54 of carbon particulate and a metal oxide generated by the heating of the organometallic compound in the engine cylinders (col. 4, lines 28-35). Although alumina may be an example of an inactive material as noted in the Office Action, Rao fails to provide any disclosure or suggestion with regard to coating a face of the inlet channels 44 with only an inactive material. In addition, Rao's col. 2, lines 9-16, as noted on page 3 of the Office Action, only discusses the exit channel 46 (where the second face is located), and fails to discuss the inlet channels 44.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

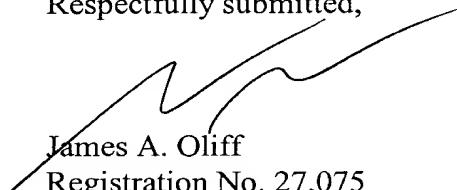
Claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Noguchi in view of Gadkaree, Rao and Jahnke et al. (Jahnke), U.S. Patent No. 6,149,589, and claims 25 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Noguchi in view of Gadkaree, Rao, Hwang et al. (Hwang), U.S. Patent No. 4,522,894, and Doty et al. (Doty), U.S. Patent No. 5,098,455. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Jahnke, Hwang and Doty fail to overcome the deficiencies of Noguchi, Rao and Gadkaree as applied to independent claims 1, 21 and 31. It is respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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